



THIS WEEK IN AGRICULTURE

News briefs from and about Idaho's agricultural industry

April 17-24

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Opportunity to provide written submissions or documents

NOTICE: The Director of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture intends to issue a determination pursuant to Idaho Code § 22-4803(1) concerning economically viable alternatives to thermal disposal of crop residue. In accordance with the requirements of § 22-4803(1), the Director will determine whether economically viable alternatives exist to burning for the purpose of (1) disposing of crop residues, (2) developing physiological conditions conducive to increased crop yields, or (3) controlling diseases, insects, pests or weed infestations.

Written or electronic submissions of documents pertaining to the determination will be considered by the Director if received by 5:00 PM Mountain Standard Time, May 15, 2005. Any such items should be addressed or delivered to the attention of:

Patrick A. Takasugi
Director, Idaho State Department of Agriculture
P.O. Box 790
2270 Old Penitentiary Road
Boise, Idaho 83712
asmp@agri.state.id.us

BEEF 2020 SPRING CLASS NOW ACCEPTING REGISTRATIONS

BOISE, Idaho (February 10, 2005) – Idaho beef producers are invited to attend BEEF 2020, a valuable educational opportunity that teaches the improvement of beef quality. This hands-on program will help producers better understand the end product they produce – BEEF for the consumer. The spring 2005 session is scheduled for April 28-30, in Rexburg, Idaho at the Livestock Center. The program is sponsored by the Idaho Beef Council in cooperation with the University of Idaho Meats Laboratory and the Animal Science Department at BYU-Idaho.

The program begins with live cattle evaluation and continues in the cooler with quality and yield grading of carcasses. Participants will team up to fabricate carcasses into wholesale and retail cuts. The course concludes with carcass value determination. Also, team members will participate in presentations on determining tenderness and palatability of steaks, retail meat identification, sensory taste panels, muscle profiling, measuring carcass traits with ultrasound, food safety interventions, and an overview of HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point).

Registration for BEEF 2020 is \$100 for Idaho producers and \$200 for out-of-state producers. Registration fees include meals, but exclude transportation and lodging. Due to the intensive, hands-on nature of this program, registration is limited to 20 participants. Idaho beef producers will be given priority. Timely registration is essential to reserve a spot in this year's class.

For more information or to register, please contact Sarah Baker, Program Coordinator at the Idaho Beef Council 208-376-6004 or sbaker@idbeef.org

DIRECTOR OF USDA's AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE TO RETIRE

BOISE, Idaho - Don Gerhardt, Director of the USDA's Idaho Agricultural Statistics Service since 1988, has announced his plan to retire May 1. Gerhardt began his employment with the USDA's Statistical Reporting Service in 1968 in Arizona. Following his tour in Arizona he worked in Michigan, Washington, D.C. and New Mexico prior to being appointed the Idaho State Statistician in June of 1988. "I have really enjoyed working with Idaho's farmers, ranchers, agribusiness and the various agricultural groups over the past seventeen years," stated Gerhardt. "Idaho has some of the finest producers in the country and it has been my privilege to work with them."

Director Takasugi wished Gerhardt the very best on his well-deserved retirement, as he also thanked him and his staff for all the help and support that they have provided on behalf of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture and all Idaho producers.

Gerhardt and his wife will continue to make Eagle, Idaho their home.

For more information contact (208) 334-1507.

CONSERVATION PROGRAM OFFERS REWARDS

Producers: Don't Wait Until the Last Week to Sign Up

BOISE, Idaho — Last year, 16 ranchers near Salmon found out their good stewardship pays dividends—possibly up to \$45,000 per year for ten years.

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offered a sign-up for the new Conservation Security Program (CSP) as a pilot project in the Lemhi Watershed in 2004. Now, the program is open to farmers and ranchers in 15 watersheds across the state from March 28 to May 27.

CSP is a voluntary program that supports ongoing stewardship of private, agricultural working lands and rewards those producers who are meeting the highest standards of conservation on their operations.

This year's watersheds are located near Bonners Ferry, Kooskia, Grangeville, Cascade, Mountain Home, Arco, St. Anthony and Salmon. Producers in the 2005 watersheds may not see another CSP sign-up for eight years.

"Producers will want to visit their local NRCS service center sooner than later," says Richard Sims, NRCS state conservationist for Idaho. "There's an eligibility process they need to go through and it takes some time. If they show up the last couple days of the sign-up, we may not have enough time to work through the application."

To be eligible for CSP, producers need to:

- Operate the majority of their land in a selected watershed.
- Promote soil and water quality through nutrient, grazing residue, pest and/or irrigation water management practices (where applicable).
- Keep written records to better manage their operation (two years of records are needed for application).
- Enhance wildlife habitat or additional resources on their property.

Last year, Don and Kathy Olson signed up for CSP and qualified for Tier 3, the highest reward the program offers. The Olsons run a 650-acre cow/calf operation along the Lemhi River, where Don's grandfather once farmed. Their management includes a prescribed grazing plan, an irrigation water management plan, nutrient management plan, fish screens on their irrigation diversions, a pond and enhanced wildlife plantings.

"We try and manage all our resources the best we can," Don Olson says. "The CSP program helped us pay off some bills that had been sitting there for quite a while."

For more information on CSP, producers can contact their local NRCS service center (contacts and numbers listed below), or visit www.idaho.nrcs.usda.gov.

Bonnors Ferry

Mike Gondek, District Conservationist, (208) 267-3340, x102

Grangeville

Richard Spencer, District Conservationist, (208) 983-1046, x109

Cascade

Keith Griswold, District Conservationist, (208) 382-3317

Weiser

Tom Yankey, District Conservationist, (208) 549-4280

Bruneau/Mountain Home/Glenns Ferry

Skip Vetten, District Conservationist, (208) 888-1890, x112

Arco

Steve Cote, District Conservationist, (208) 527-8557, x105

St. Anthony

Ken Beckmann, District Conservationist, (208) 624-3341, x102

Salmon

Barry Albert, District Conservationist, (208) 756-3211, x102

For more information contact Jody Fagan 208-685-6978

**ISDA MARKETING
MONTH AT A GLANCE**

April 27-29

Taiwan FMI Buying Mission – Idaho

April 29-30

Taiwan Seafood and Wine Tasting Seminar

**DIRECTOR TAKASUGI
CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS**

April 20

**Cattle MOU-Idaho Department of Agriculture
Main A and B 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

Editor's Note: Please forward by 10:00 a.m. Thursday any press releases or information to rmason@idahoag.us.